

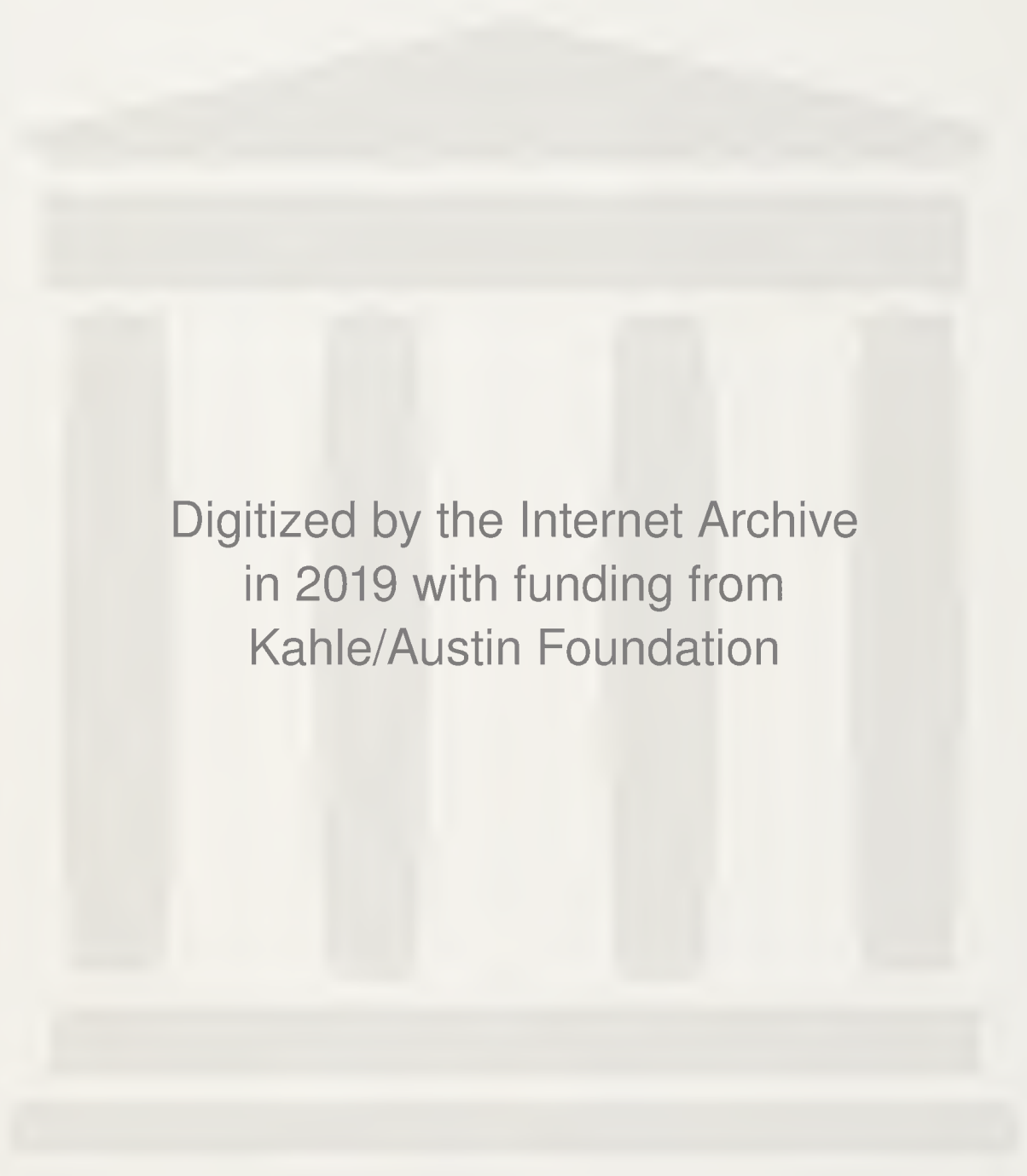
Better Homes and Gardens®

HOLIDAY

cookies & desserts

Italian fruit-filled Cookies - 24 Gavel





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Better Homes and Gardens®

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*Cranberry-Orange Biscotti and
Hazelnut Shortbread Stars,
pages 11–12*

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BROWN SUGAR COOKIE MIX

*Apricot Bars (shown top),
Polka-Dot Cookie Bars (shown
bottom), and Cranberry
Jumbles (shown opposite)
all start with Brown Sugar
Cookie Mix.*

- 3 cups all-purpose flour
- 1 cup whole wheat flour
- 2 cups packed brown sugar
- 2 teaspoons baking powder
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon baking soda
- $1\frac{1}{2}$ cups shortening

STIR together all-purpose flour, whole wheat flour, brown sugar, baking powder, and baking soda in a very large mixing bowl.

CUT in shortening until mixture resembles fine crumbs. Store tightly covered at room temperature up to 3 weeks. To measure, lightly spoon the mix into a measuring cup and level with a spatula. Makes about $8\frac{1}{2}$ cups.



POLKA-DOT COOKIE BARS

How fast can you make these kid-pleasing bars? Plan on 10 minutes for mixing and 20 to 25 minutes for baking.

- 2 slightly beaten eggs**
- ⅓ cup milk**
- 2½ cups Brown Sugar Cookie Mix**
- ½ cup miniature candy-coated semisweet or milk chocolate pieces**

PREHEAT oven to 350°F. Beat together eggs and milk in a large mixing bowl. Stir in the Brown Sugar Cookie Mix until combined. Spread batter evenly in a greased 11×7×1½-inch baking pan.

BAKE in the preheated oven for 10 minutes. Sprinkle chocolate pieces evenly over top of partially baked bars. Bake 10 to 15 minutes more or until golden brown and firm around edges. Cool in pan on a wire rack. Cut into bars. Makes 24.

APRICOT BARS

Here's a dressier bar made from the same basic mix. If you prefer, choose another flavor of pie filling or preserves.

- 1 slightly beaten egg**
- 1 tablespoon water**
- ½ teaspoon vanilla**
- 2 cups Brown Sugar Cookie Mix**
- ¾ cup quick-cooking rolled oats**
- 1 12-ounce can apricot or other flavor cake and pastry filling or 1 cup apricot or other flavor preserves**
- ½ cup Brown Sugar Cookie Mix**
- ¼ cup quick-cooking rolled oats**
- ¼ teaspoon ground nutmeg or cardamom**
- Lemon Icing (optional)**

PREHEAT oven to 350°F. For crust, combine egg, water, and vanilla in a large mixing bowl. Stir in the 2 cups Brown Sugar Cookie Mix and the ¾ cup rolled oats. Spread mixture in a greased 9×9×2-inch baking pan.

BAKE in the preheated oven for 10 minutes. Spread the partially baked crust with cake and pastry filling or preserves. Combine the ½ cup Brown Sugar Cookie Mix, the ¼ cup rolled oats, and nutmeg or cardamom in a medium bowl. Sprinkle over filling. Bake about 15 minutes more or until top is golden brown. Cool in pan on a wire rack. If desired, drizzle with Lemon Icing. Cut into bars. Makes 24.

LEMON ICING: Stir together ¾ cup sifted *powdered sugar* and enough *lemon juice* (3 to 4 teaspoons) to make icing of drizzling consistency.

CRANBERRY JUMBLES

Cranberry and orange turn the basic cookie mix into a distinctly holiday treat.

- 1 slightly beaten egg**
- 2 tablespoons cranberry juice or orange juice**
- 3 cups Brown Sugar Cookie Mix**
- 1 cup dried cranberries**
- ½ cup slivered almonds**
- ½ teaspoon ground cinnamon**
- Orange Icing**

PREHEAT oven to 350°F. Combine egg and cranberry juice or orange juice in a large mixing bowl. Stir in the Brown Sugar Cookie Mix, cranberries, almonds, and cinnamon. Drop dough by rounded teaspoons 2 inches apart onto an ungreased cookie sheet.

BAKE in the preheated oven for 12 to 14 minutes or until bottoms are lightly browned. Transfer to wire racks and cool. Drizzle Orange Icing over tops of cooled cookies. Makes 32.

ORANGE ICING: Stir together 1 cup sifted *powdered sugar*, ½ teaspoon finely shredded *orange peel*, and enough *orange juice* (3 to 4 teaspoons) to make icing of drizzling consistency.



CHOCOLATE-MINT BARS

Because the crumb crust is firm and the tops are soft, it's best not to stack these rich, chewy squares.

- 1½ cups packaged chocolate cookie crumbs
- 1 cup chopped nuts
- 1 cup mint-flavor semisweet chocolate pieces
- 1 cup flaked coconut
- 1 14-ounce can sweetened condensed milk

PREHEAT oven to 350°F. Sprinkle crumbs evenly onto the bottom of a generously greased (use about 1 tablespoon butter or margarine) 13×9×2-inch baking pan. Sprinkle with nuts, chocolate pieces, and coconut. Then drizzle sweetened condensed milk evenly over all.

BAKE in the preheated oven for 20 to 25 minutes or until coconut is golden brown around edges. Cool in pan on a wire rack. Cut into squares. Cover and chill to store. Makes 48.

Peanut Butter and Chocolate Pinwheels, Quick Panforte Bars, Chocolate-Mint Bars, and Fudge Tarts (shown opposite).



QUICK PANFORTE BARS

Panforte, a fruit-packed confection, is traditional in northern Italy.

- 1 18-ounce roll refrigerated sugar cookie dough
- 1 can (10 to 12 ounces) unsalted mixed nuts, coarsely chopped
- ½ cup butterscotch-flavor pieces or semisweet chocolate pieces
- ½ cup mixed dried fruit bits, coarsely chopped dried apricots, or golden raisins
- ½ cup shredded coconut

PREHEAT oven to 350°F. Stir sugar cookie dough in a large mixing bowl with a wooden spoon until softened. Add nuts, butterscotch or chocolate pieces, and dried fruit. Stir until well-mixed. Pat dough evenly in a lightly greased 9×9×2-inch baking pan. Sprinkle coconut over the top, pressing it in lightly.

BAKE in the preheated oven about 30 minutes or until a wooden toothpick inserted near center comes out clean. Cool completely in pan on a wire rack. Cut into bars. Makes 32.

FUDGE TARTS

Just three ingredients are all you need for these tiny tarts with their rich, glossy filling.

- Nonstick cooking spray
- ½ of an 18-ounce roll refrigerated peanut butter cookie dough
- ½ cup semisweet chocolate pieces
- ¼ cup sweetened condensed milk

PREHEAT oven to 350°F. Spray twenty-four 1¾-inch muffin cups with cooking spray; set aside.

FOR tart shells, cut cookie dough into six equal pieces. Cut each piece into four equal slices. Place each slice of dough in a prepared cup.

BAKE in the preheated oven for 9 minutes or until edges are lightly browned and dough is slightly firm but not set. Remove tart shells from the oven. Gently press a shallow indentation in each tart shell with the back of a round ½ teaspoon measuring spoon.

BAKE 2 minutes more or until the edges of tart shells are firm and light golden brown. Let tart shells cool in cups on a wire rack for 15 minutes. Carefully remove tart shells from cups. Cool completely on wire racks.

FOR FILLING, combine chocolate pieces and sweetened condensed milk in a small saucepan. Cook and stir over medium heat until chocolate is melted. Spoon a slightly rounded teaspoon of filling into each cooled tart shell. Cool, allowing filling to set. Makes 24.

PEANUT BUTTER AND CHOCOLATE PINWHEELS

If you're really pressed for time, chill the rolls in the freezer only 30 minutes or until they're firm enough to slice.

- 1 18-ounce roll refrigerated peanut butter cookie dough
- ¼ cup all-purpose flour
- 1 18-ounce roll refrigerated sugar cookie dough
- ¼ cup unsweetened cocoa powder
- ½ cup finely chopped peanuts

PREHEAT oven to 375°F. Combine peanut butter cookie dough and flour in a large mixing bowl; use a wooden spoon to mix well. Divide dough in half.

COMBINE sugar cookie dough and cocoa powder in another large mixing bowl; use another wooden spoon to mix well. Divide dough in half.

BETWEEN pieces of waxed paper, roll *half* of the peanut butter dough into a 12×6-inch rectangle. Repeat with *half* of the sugar cookie dough. Remove the top pieces of waxed paper. Invert one rectangle on top of the other; press down gently to seal. Remove top piece of waxed paper. Tightly roll up, jelly-roll style, starting from a long side. Repeat with remaining dough portions.

SPRINKLE *half* of the peanuts onto waxed paper. Roll one log of dough in peanuts. Wrap in waxed paper or plastic wrap. Repeat with remaining dough and peanuts. Chill dough logs 1 hour or until firm enough to slice.

USING a sharp, thin knife, cut dough logs into ¼-inch-thick slices. Place the slices 2 inches apart on an ungreased cookie sheet.

BAKE in the preheated oven for 8 to 10 minutes or until edges are firm. Transfer cookies to a wire rack and cool. Makes about 60.



*Chocolate-Peppermint
Sandwiches, Crispy Cereal
Treats, and No-Bake Orange
Balls (shown opposite)*

CHOCOLATE-PEPPERMINT SANDWICHES

No cooking, no cutting, almost no cleanup—kids can make these on their own. Once they've tried the chocolate-and-peppermint combination, they can substitute crushed cherry-flavor hard candies for the peppermints. Then they'll want to try other combinations.

- ½** cup canned vanilla or chocolate frosting
- 3** tablespoons finely crushed striped round peppermint candies
- 44** chocolate wafers

STIR together frosting and crushed candies in a small mixing bowl. Spread *1 level teaspoon* frosting mixture each on flat side of 22 of the chocolate wafers. Top with the remaining chocolate wafers, flat side toward frosting mixture. Makes 22.





NO-BAKE ORANGE BALLS

These chewy, sophisticated balls are no-bake confections for grown-ups.

- 2 cups finely crushed, crisp unfrosted sugar cookies (about 8 ounces)**
- 1 cup toasted hazelnuts (filberts), almonds, or pecans, finely chopped**
- 1 cup sifted powdered sugar**
- ¼ cup light-color corn syrup**
- 2 tablespoons orange, coffee, or almond liqueur**
- 2 tablespoons butter (no substitutes), melted**
- ⅓ cup sifted powdered sugar**
- 2 teaspoons orange edible glitter (optional)**

COMBINE crushed cookies, nuts, the 1 cup powdered sugar, corn syrup, liqueur, and butter in a mixing bowl; stir with a wooden spoon until well-mixed.

SHAPE mixture into 1-inch balls. Combine the ⅓ cup powdered sugar and, if desired, edible glitter. Roll balls in the powdered sugar mixture; cover. Let stand 2 hours. Roll balls again in the powdered sugar mixture before serving. Chill or freeze for longer storage. Makes 40.

CRISPY CEREAL TREATS

Multicolor cereal gives a holiday twist to an all-time favorite kids' treat.

- Nonstick cooking spray**
- 3 tablespoons butter or margarine**
- 1 10½-ounce package (about 6 cups) tiny marshmallows**
- 6 cups fruit-flavor crisp rice cereal**

LINE a 13x9x2-inch baking pan with foil, extending the foil over the edges of the pan. Spray foil with cooking spray. Set pan aside.

MELT butter in a large saucepan; add marshmallows. Cook and stir over low heat until marshmallows melt and mixture is smooth. Remove from heat; stir in cereal. With the back of a buttered spoon, press the cereal mixture into the prepared pan. Cool.

USE foil to lift cereal mixture out of pan. Cut into bars. Makes about 16.

APRICOT-NUT DIAMONDS

To cut into diamonds, first cut straight lines down the length of the pan. Then cut diagonal lines across the pan. Trim the end pieces into triangles, rectangles, or squares.

- 1** cup all-purpose flour
- Dash salt
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup butter (no substitutes)
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup snipped dried apricots
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup packed brown sugar
- 2** eggs
- 1** cup chopped walnuts
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup coconut
- 1** teaspoon vanilla
- 2** tablespoons all-purpose flour
- Powdered Sugar Icing

PREHEAT oven to 375°F. For crust, combine the 1 cup flour and salt in a mixing bowl. Cut in butter until crumbly. Press into the bottom of a lightly greased 11x7x1½-inch baking pan. Bake in the preheated oven for 12 minutes.

MEANWHILE, combine apricots and enough *water* to cover in a small saucepan. Bring to boiling. Reduce heat and simmer, covered, for 10 minutes; drain.

FOR TOPPING, stir together brown sugar and eggs in a large mixing bowl until combined. Stir in drained apricots, walnuts, coconut, and vanilla. Add the 2 tablespoons flour; stir until combined. Spread mixture evenly over crust.

BAKE in the 375° oven for 15 minutes. Cool in pan on a wire rack. Drizzle with Powdered Sugar Icing. Cut into diamonds. Cover and store in the refrigerator. Makes about 30 bars.

POWDERED SUGAR ICING: Stir together 1 cup sifted *powdered sugar*, $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon *vanilla*, and 1 tablespoon *milk* in a small bowl.

Stir in additional *milk*, 1 teaspoon at a time, until icing is smooth and of drizzling consistency.

SUPER-EASY CHOCOLATE BARS

To ensure nice, even squares, cool the layered bars thoroughly before cutting so they have time to set up.

- 1** cup butter (no substitutes)
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup sugar
- $\frac{1}{8}$ teaspoon salt
- 2** cups all-purpose flour
- 1** 14-ounce can (1¼ cups) sweetened condensed milk
- 1** cup ($\frac{1}{2}$ of a 12-ounce package) semisweet chocolate pieces
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup chopped walnuts or pecans
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon vanilla

PREHEAT oven to 350°F. For crust, beat butter in a large mixing bowl with an electric mixer on medium to high speed for 30 seconds. Add sugar and salt; beat until combined, scraping sides of the bowl occasionally. Beat in the flour on low speed until combined. Press *two-thirds* of the crust mixture into the bottom of an ungreased 13x9x2-inch baking pan.

FOR FILLING, combine sweetened condensed milk and chocolate in a medium saucepan. Stir over low heat until chocolate melts and mixture is smooth. Remove from heat. Stir in nuts and vanilla. Spread hot mixture over the crust. Dot with remaining crust mixture.

BAKE in the preheated oven about 35 minutes or until golden. Cool in pan on a wire rack. Cut into squares. Makes about 25 bars.

CREME DE MENTHE BROWNIES

If your holiday schedule allows no time for rolling and shaping cookies, you've come to the right recipe.

- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup butter (no substitutes)
- 2** ounces unsweetened chocolate, cut up
- 1** cup granulated sugar
- 2** eggs
- $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon mint extract
- $\frac{2}{3}$ cup all-purpose flour
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup butter (no substitutes)
- 1½** cups sifted powdered sugar
- 2** tablespoons green crème de menthe
- 1** ounce semisweet chocolate
- Layered chocolate-mint candies, chopped (optional)

PREHEAT oven to 375°F. Grease a 9x9x2-inch baking pan; set aside.

PLACE $\frac{1}{2}$ cup butter and unsweetened chocolate in a heavy medium saucepan. Melt over low heat. Remove from heat. Stir in granulated sugar, eggs, and mint extract. Beat lightly by hand until just combined. Stir in flour.

SPREAD batter in prepared pan. Bake in the preheated oven for 20 minutes. Cool completely in pan on a wire rack.

BEAT the $\frac{1}{4}$ cup butter in a medium mixing bowl with an electric mixer on low to medium speed until fluffy. Gradually add *1 cup* of the powdered sugar. Beat in crème de menthe. Gradually beat in remaining $\frac{1}{2}$ cup powdered sugar to make of spreading consistency.

SPREAD crème de menthe mixture over brownies. Melt semisweet chocolate in a small heavy saucepan over low heat. Drizzle chocolate over brownies. Sprinkle with chopped layered chocolate-mint candies, if desired. Cut into triangles or bars. Makes 16 to 20 bars.



*Crème de Menthe
Brownies*

*Clockwise from top:
Cranberry-Orange Biscotti,
Chocolate Heaven Cookies,
Hazelnut Shortbread Stars,
and Bittersweet Chocolate
and Toffee Triangles.*



CRANBERRY-ORANGE BISCOTTI

So they'll bake evenly, place the biscotti slices upright about ½ inch apart on the cookie sheet.

- 1½ cups dried cranberries
- ⅔ cup orange juice
- ½ cup butter (no substitutes)
- ¾ cup sugar
- 1½ teaspoons baking powder
- 2 eggs
- 4 teaspoons finely shredded orange peel
- 2¼ cups all-purpose flour
- ⅓ cup chopped crystallized ginger

PREHEAT oven to 350°F. Place cranberries in a small bowl. Heat orange juice in a small saucepan until warm; pour over berries and let stand 10 to 15 minutes or until cranberries are soft. Drain well, pressing berries to remove excess liquid. Discard juice; set the cranberries aside.

BEAT butter in a large mixing bowl with an electric mixer on medium speed for 30 seconds. Add sugar and baking powder; beat until combined. Beat in eggs and orange peel. Beat in as much flour as you can. Stir in remaining flour with a wooden spoon. Stir in cranberries and ginger.

DIVIDE dough into three portions. With lightly floured hands, shape each portion into a 9×2-inch log; place logs 3 inches apart on an ungreased cookie sheet. Bake in the preheated oven for 25 minutes or until tops are lightly browned. Cool on pan on a wire rack for 20 minutes. Reduce oven temperature to 300°F. Cut each roll diagonally into ½-inch-thick slices.

PLACE slices upright on cookie sheet, leaving ½ inch between slices. Bake in 300°F oven for 15 minutes. Transfer to wire racks and cool. Store up to 3 days in a covered container at room temperature or freeze up to 3 months in a freezer container. Makes about 40.

BITTERSWEET CHOCOLATE AND TOFFEE TRIANGLES

These triangles taste just as rich and decadent as they look.

- 1 cup butter (no substitutes)
- 1 cup packed brown sugar
- 1 egg yolk
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- 2 cups all-purpose flour
- 8 ounces bittersweet chocolate, cut up
- 2 tablespoons milk
- ¾ cup coarsely chopped pecans
- ¾ cup almond toffee pieces

PREHEAT oven to 375°F. Beat butter in a mixing bowl with an electric mixer on medium to high speed for 30 seconds. Add brown sugar and beat until combined. Beat in egg yolk and vanilla. Beat in as much flour as you can with the mixer. Stir in remaining flour with a wooden spoon. Pat dough evenly into the bottom of a greased 15×10×1-inch pan.

MELT chocolate in a heavy medium saucepan over low heat, stirring until chocolate is smooth. Transfer 2 *tablespoons* of the melted chocolate to a microwave-safe small bowl; stir in milk and set aside. Spread remaining melted chocolate evenly over dough in pan. Sprinkle pecans and almond toffee pieces over chocolate.

BAKE in the preheated oven about 18 minutes or until toffee pieces have melted and nuts are lightly toasted. Cool in pan on a wire rack.

MEANWHILE, reheat the reserved chocolate mixture, uncovered, in a microwave oven on high for 30 to 45 seconds or until smooth. Drizzle melted chocolate over bars. Let cool about 1 hour or until set. Cut into 24 squares; cut each square in half diagonally. Store in an airtight container at room temperature up to 5 days. Makes 48.

CHOCOLATE HEAVEN COOKIES

*You may wonder whether the amount of flour required for these cookies is correct—
½ cup isn't much—
but it's just right for making moist and fudgy cookie centers.*

- ½ cup all-purpose flour
- ½ teaspoon baking powder
- 6 ounces semisweet chocolate, cut up
- ¼ cup butter (no substitutes)
- 2 eggs
- 1 teaspoon instant coffee crystals
- 1 cup sugar
- ½ cup semisweet chocolate pieces
- ½ cup chopped walnuts

PREHEAT oven to 325°F. Line a cookie sheet with parchment paper; set aside. Stir together flour and baking powder; set aside.

PLACE cut-up chocolate and butter in top of a double boiler; set top over, but not touching, simmering water. Stir constantly until mixture is smooth and shiny. Or melt cut-up chocolate and butter in a small saucepan over low heat, stirring constantly until mixture is smooth and shiny. Remove from heat.

BEAT eggs and coffee crystals in a large mixing bowl with an electric mixer on medium speed for 30 seconds. Gradually add the sugar; beat 2 minutes more or until mixture is thick. With mixer on low speed, beat in the chocolate mixture. Beat in flour mixture. Stir in chocolate pieces and nuts. (Dough will thicken upon standing.)

DROP dough by heaping teaspoons 2 inches apart on cookie sheets lined with parchment paper.

BAKE in the preheated oven for 9 to 10 minutes or until tops are cracked and shiny (cookies may not appear set). Cool on cookie sheet

(continued)

for 5 minutes. Transfer cookies to wire racks and cool completely.

STORE in an airtight container at room temperature up to 3 days. Or pack in freezer containers and freeze up to 3 months. Thaw at room temperature. Makes about 32.

HAZELNUT SHORTBREAD STARS

This shortbread is mixed in a food processor, forming a dough that's easier to handle than one mixed the conventional way.

- 1 cup chopped hazelnuts (filberts) or pecan halves**
- 2 cups all-purpose flour**
- ½ cup sugar**
- ⅓ cup cornstarch**
- 1 cup cold butter (no substitutes), cut into small pieces**
- ½ teaspoon vanilla**
- 4 ounces white baking bar, melted (optional)**

PREHEAT oven to 350°F. Place hazelnuts or pecans into a shallow baking pan, and bake in a 350° oven about 8 minutes or until lightly toasted; cool.

PLACE flour, sugar, and cornstarch into a food processor bowl fitted with a metal blade. Add butter and vanilla; process with several on/off turns until mixture is crumbly. Add nuts and process until mixture is combined but slightly crumbly. Mixture should not be a ball of dough.

PLACE dough on a lightly floured surface and form into a ball.

KNEAD until smooth. Divide dough in half; wrap each half in plastic wrap, and chill about 30 minutes or until easy to handle.

ROLL one half of dough at a time on a lightly floured surface to ¼- to ½-inch thickness. Cut dough into stars or rounds with 2½- to 3-inch

cookie cutters. Place cutouts 1 inch apart on an ungreased cookie sheet. Pierce each cutout three times with a fork, going all the way through to the cookie sheet.

BAKE in the preheated oven about 12 minutes or until edges and bottoms just start to brown. Transfer to wire racks and cool. If desired, drizzle cooled cookies with melted white baking bar. Makes about 30.

WHITE CHOCOLATE-RASPBERRY COOKIES

White chocolate makes these cookies melt-in-your-mouth delicious. Any favorite fruit jam is ideal on these.

- 8 ounces white baking bar**
- ½ cup butter (no substitutes)**
- 1 cup granulated sugar**
- 1 teaspoon baking soda**
- ¼ teaspoon salt**
- 2 eggs**
- 2¾ cups all-purpose flour**
- ½ cup seedless raspberry jam**
- 3 ounces white baking bar**
- ½ teaspoon shortening**

PREHEAT oven to 375°F. Melt 4 ounces of the white baking bar over low heat while stirring constantly; set aside to cool.

BEAT butter in a large mixing bowl with an electric mixer on medium to high speed about 30 seconds or until softened. Add the sugar, baking soda, and salt. Beat until combined. Beat in eggs and melted white baking bar until combined. Beat in as much of the flour as you can with the mixer. Stir in any remaining flour using a wooden spoon. Chop remaining 4 ounces of the white baking bar and stir into batter.

DROP batter by rounded teaspoons 2 inches apart onto a greased cookie sheet. Bake in the

preheated oven for 7 to 9 minutes or until cookies are lightly browned around edges. Cool on cookie sheet for 1 minute. Remove cookies from cookie sheet and cool on a wire rack. Store in an airtight container or plastic bag at room temperature for up to 3 days.

HEAT and stir the jam in a small saucepan over low heat until melted just before serving cookies. Spoon about ½ teaspoon of jam onto top of each cookie. Heat and stir the 3 ounces white baking bar and shortening in a small saucepan over low heat until melted. Drizzle each cookie with some of the melted mixture. Refrigerate cookies about 15 minutes to firm chocolate, if necessary. Makes about 48.

PEANUT BUTTER FUDGE

This chewy nutty fudge will bring out the child in everyone.

- 4 cups sugar**
- 2 5-ounce cans evaporated milk (1⅓ cups)**
- 1 cup butter (no substitutes)**
- 1 10-ounce package peanut butter pieces (1¾ cups)**
- 1 7-ounce jar marshmallow creme**
- 1 cup finely chopped peanuts**
- 1 teaspoon vanilla**



White Chocolate-Raspberry Cookies

LINE an 8x8x2-inch baking pan with foil; extend foil over edges. Butter foil; set aside.

BUTTER sides of a heavy 3-quart saucepan. Add sugar, evaporated milk, and butter. Clip a candy thermometer to side of pan. Cook and stir over medium-high heat to 236°F, soft-ball stage (about 12 minutes).

REMOVE saucepan from heat; remove thermometer. Add peanut butter pieces, marshmallow creme, peanuts, and vanilla; stir until peanut butter pieces are melted. Spread into prepared pan. Score into 36 squares while warm. When firm, cut into squares. Cool completely and wrap with plastic wrap. Store in the refrigerator. Makes about 3½ pounds (36 servings).

BRICKLE BARS

A bar cookie and candy treat in one, the batter is made in minutes using just one saucepan and a spoon.

- ½ cup butter (no substitutes)
- 2 ounces unsweetened chocolate
- 1 cup sugar
- 2 eggs
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- ¾ cup all-purpose flour
- ¾ cup almond brickle pieces
- ½ cup miniature semisweet chocolate pieces

PREHEAT oven to 350°F. Cook and stir butter and unsweetened chocolate in a medium saucepan over low heat until melted. Remove from heat. Beat in sugar, eggs, and vanilla with a wooden spoon until combined. Do not overmix. Stir in flour. Spread the batter into a greased 8x8x2-inch baking pan. Sprinkle with almond brickle and chocolate pieces. Bake in the preheated oven for 30 minutes. Cool in pan on wire rack. Cut into bars. Makes 16.



*Top to bottom:
Peanut Butter
Fudge, Brickle Bars,
and Pistachio
Cookie Sticks*

PISTACHIO COOKIE STICKS

Scented with cardamom, these exotic bar cookies travel well.

- 1¼ cups all-purpose flour
- 3 tablespoons sugar
- ¼ teaspoon ground cardamom
- ½ cup butter (no substitutes)
- ¼ cup finely chopped pistachios
- ½ cup semisweet chocolate pieces
- 1 teaspoon shortening

PREHEAT oven to 325°F. Stir together flour, sugar, and cardamom in a medium mixing bowl. Cut in butter using a pastry blender until the mixture resembles fine crumbs.

Stir in pistachios. Form mixture into a ball and place on a lightly floured surface. Knead until smooth. Pat or roll dough into a 10x6-inch rectangle; place on an ungreased baking sheet. Bake in the preheated oven for 25 to 30 minutes or until edges are lightly browned. Cut into 3x1-inch sticks while the dough is still warm. Cool on wire racks.

MELT semisweet chocolate and shortening in a small heavy saucepan over low heat, stirring occasionally. Drizzle over cooled cookies. Makes 20.



GLAZED GINGERBREAD CAKE

Sprinkled atop as a garnish, crystallized ginger sparks the flavor and presentation of this time-honored cake. Look for crystallized ginger in the spice or baking aisle of the supermarket.

- 3 cups all-purpose flour
- 1½ teaspoons ground cinnamon
- 1½ teaspoons ground ginger
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 1 cup shortening
- ½ cup packed brown sugar
- 2 eggs
- 1 cup light molasses
- 1 cup water
- Lemon Icing
- Crystallized ginger strips (optional)

PREHEAT oven to 350°F. Grease a 10-inch fluted tube pan; set aside.

STIR together flour, cinnamon, ground ginger, baking powder, and

baking soda in a large mixing bowl; set aside.

PLACE shortening in another large mixing bowl; beat with an electric mixer on medium speed for 30 seconds. Add brown sugar; beat until fluffy. Add eggs and molasses; beat for 1 minute. Add flour mixture and water alternately to egg mixture, beating on low speed after each addition until combined. Pour batter into prepared pan.

BAKE in the preheated oven for 50 to 55 minutes or until a wooden toothpick inserted near the center comes out clean. Cool for 30 minutes in pan on a wire rack. Remove from pan and cool completely. Drizzle with Lemon Icing. If desired, garnish with crystallized ginger strips. Makes 12 to 16 servings.

LEMON ICING: Combine 1 cup sifted powdered sugar, ¼ teaspoon vanilla, and 1 tablespoon lemon juice in a mixing bowl. Add additional lemon juice, if necessary, for drizzling consistency.

DOUBLE-CHOCOLATE ORANGE TORTE

If you prefer a nonalcoholic version, simply replace the orange liqueur with orange juice.

- 3 squares (3 ounces) unsweetened chocolate, coarsely chopped
- ¾ cup all-purpose flour
- 1½ teaspoons baking powder
- ½ teaspoon baking soda
- ½ teaspoon salt
- ½ cup butter (no substitutes), softened
- 1 cup sugar
- 4 eggs
- 2 tablespoons orange liqueur
- ½ cup water
- 1 tablespoon finely shredded orange peel
- 1 tablespoon orange liqueur
- 1 tablespoon orange juice
- ½ cup orange marmalade
- Bittersweet Chocolate Icing
- Kumquat slices (optional)
- Chocolate leaves (optional)

PREHEAT oven to 350°F. Grease and flour an 8x8x2-inch baking pan; set aside.

PLACE chopped unsweetened chocolate in a heavy saucepan over low heat, stirring constantly, until chocolate just starts to melt. Remove from heat. Stir until smooth; cool. Stir together the flour, baking powder, baking soda, and salt; set aside.

BEAT the butter in a large mixing bowl with an electric mixer on medium to high speed for 30 seconds. Add sugar; beat until well-combined. Add eggs, one at a time, beating well after each addition. Beat in chocolate and the 2 tablespoons liqueur. Add flour mixture and water alternately to egg mixture, beating on low speed after each addition just until combined. Stir in orange peel. Pour batter into prepared pan.

BAKE in the preheated oven about 35 minutes or until a wooden

Double-Chocolate Orange Torte



toothpick inserted near the center comes out clean. Cool cake on a wire rack for 10 minutes. Loosen edges of cake with a spatula. Invert onto wire rack. Remove the pan. Cool cake thoroughly on wire rack.

COMBINE the 1 tablespoon liqueur and orange juice. Split cake in half horizontally. Sprinkle each cut side with half of the liqueur mixture. Place bottom half of cake, cut side up, on a platter; spread the marmalade evenly on top. Top with remaining cake layer, cut side down.

FROST the cake with Bittersweet Chocolate Icing. (You can frost the cake several hours before serving.) If desired, garnish with kumquat slices and Chocolate Leaves.

BITTERSWEET CHOCOLATE ICING: Combine $\frac{1}{3}$ cup *whipping cream* and 1 tablespoon *light-color corn syrup* in a heavy small saucepan. Bring just to boiling, stirring constantly. Remove from heat. Stir in 6 ounces *semisweet chocolate*, finely chopped, or 1 cup *semisweet chocolate pieces*, stirring

until chocolate is melted and mixture is smooth. Cool to room temperature. Stir before using.

CHOCOLATE LEAVES: Gather a clean, small paintbrush, 7 chemical-free nontoxic *rose leaves*, and 2 ounces melted *white baking bar* or *candy coating*. Using the paintbrush, brush one or two coats of chocolate on the underside of each leaf. Wipe away any chocolate from unpainted side of the leaf. Place leaves, chocolate side up, on a baking sheet lined with waxed paper; let dry. Before using, carefully peel the leaf away from the chocolate, using a toothpick to hold the chocolate.

Clockwise from top: *Peppermint
Sticks, Fruit and Hazelnut
Clusters, and Coffee-Filled
Banana Bread Stacks*



PEPPERMINT STICKS

We used red food coloring to bring a holiday hue to these tender little bites. Green food coloring will do the trick, too.

- 1 cup butter (no substitutes), softened
- 1 cup granulated sugar
- ½ teaspoon baking powder
- 1 egg
- ¼ teaspoon peppermint extract
- 2½ cups all-purpose flour
- 15 hard peppermint candies, crushed (⅓ cup)
- Red paste food coloring
- 1 cup sifted powdered sugar
- 1 to 2 tablespoons milk

PREHEAT oven to 375°F. Beat butter in a large mixing bowl with an electric mixer on medium to high speed for 30 seconds. Add granulated sugar and baking powder. Beat until fluffy. Beat in egg and peppermint extract. Beat in as much of the flour as you can with the mixer. Stir in any remaining flour with a wooden spoon.

DIVIDE dough in half. Knead crushed candies into one portion of dough. Tint remaining portion with food coloring; knead into dough until well-mixed. Divide each half of dough into 10 portions. Roll each portion into a 14-inch-long rope. Twist each white rope together with a red rope. Cut twisted ropes into 1½-inch lengths. Place 2 inches apart on a foil-lined cookie sheet.

BAKE in the preheated oven for 6 to 8 minutes or until edges are firm. Transfer to a wire rack; cool for 30 minutes.

FOR GLAZE, stir together powdered sugar and 1 tablespoon of the milk in a small mixing bowl. Stir in additional milk, 1 teaspoon at a time, to make glaze of drizzling consistency. Drizzle cookies with glaze. Makes 80.

TO MAKE AHEAD: Transfer cooled, unglazed cookies to a freezer container. Seal, label, and freeze for up to 6 months. Thaw in container at room temperature for 1 hour. Drizzle with glaze as directed.

FRUIT AND HAZELNUT CLUSTERS

To keep the candy mixture easy to handle, set the saucepan in warm water while filling the candy cups.

- 1 cup dried cranberries
- 1 cup golden raisins
- 2 cups hazelnuts (filberts)
- 1 lb. vanilla- or chocolate-flavor candy coating, cut up
- 60 miniature foil candy cups (optional)

PREHEAT oven to 325°F. Place dried cranberries and raisins in a steamer basket. Place the basket over, but not touching, boiling water in a saucepan. Cover and steam fruits for 5 minutes; remove from steamer basket. Spread fruits on paper towels and let stand at room temperature 1 to 2 hours or until completely dry.

MEANWHILE, spread nuts in a 15×10×1-inch baking pan. Bake in the preheated oven for 15 minutes or until toasted. Rub warm nuts with a clean towel to remove skins. Cool for 20 minutes.

MELT candy coating in a heavy large saucepan over low heat, stirring constantly. Remove pan from heat.

FOLD hazelnuts and fruits into candy coating. Drop mixture by teaspoonfuls into foil candy cups or onto waxed paper. Let candies stand in a cool, dry place for 30 minutes or until firm. Makes 60.

TO MAKE AHEAD: Place candies in an airtight container and store in a cool, dry place for up to 2 days.

COFFEE-FILLED BANANA BREAD STACKS

Coffee crystals lend a distinctive flavor to this delicious bite-size dessert.

- 1½ cups all-purpose flour
- 1½ teaspoons baking powder
- ¼ teaspoon baking soda
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- 2 teaspoons instant coffee crystals
- 4 teaspoons hot water
- 1 egg
- 1 cup mashed bananas (3 medium)
- ¾ cup sugar
- ¼ cup cooking oil
- ½ cup toasted finely chopped pecans
- Coffee Filling

PREHEAT oven to 350°F. Grease bottom and ½ inch up sides of an 8×4×2-inch loaf pan; set aside.

COMBINE flour, baking powder, baking soda, and salt in a bowl. Make a well in center of flour mixture; set aside.

DISSOLVE coffee in the hot water in another mixing bowl. Add egg, bananas, sugar, and cooking oil. Stir until combined. Add egg mixture all at once to flour mixture. Stir just until moistened (batter should be lumpy). Fold in pecans.

SPOON batter evenly into prepared pan. Bake in the preheated oven for 50 to 55 minutes or until a wooden toothpick inserted near the center comes out clean. Cool bread in pan for 10 minutes. Remove from pan and cool on a wire rack. Wrap in plastic wrap and store at room temperature for up to 12 hours.

UNWRAP loaf; trim top of loaf with a serrated knife so it is even. Trim ¼ inch from bottom and sides of loaf. Slice loaf horizontally into three even slices. Spoon half of the Coffee Filling



(continued)

over one slice, and spread evenly with a knife. Top with another slice. Spoon remaining filling over stacked slices, and spread evenly. Top with remaining slice. Cut stacked loaf crosswise into two even squares. Cut diagonally through each square to make four triangles, then cut each triangle in half (you should have 16 triangles total). Secure each stack with a decorative skewer. Arrange stacks on a serving platter. Makes 16 stacks.

COFFEE FILLING: Dissolve 1 teaspoon *instant coffee crystals* in 2 tablespoons *milk* in a small bowl; set aside. Beat 2 tablespoons *butter* (no substitutes), softened, in a small mixing bowl with an electric mixer on medium to high speed for 30 seconds. Gradually add 1 cup sifted *powdered sugar*, beating well. Slowly beat in coffee mixture and ½ teaspoon *vanilla*. Slowly beat in 1 cup additional sifted *powdered sugar*. Beat in additional *milk*, if needed, to make of spreading consistency.

TO MAKE AHEAD: Wrap cooled loaf in moisture- and vaporproof freezer wrap. Seal, label, and freeze for up to 3 months. Thaw in package at room temperature for 1 hour; unwrap loaf. Cover Coffee Filling; chill up to 24 hours. Before using, let stand at room temperature for 30 minutes. Beat in additional milk, if needed, to make of spreading consistency.

LEMON TEA CAKES

Not for Christmastime only! Frost these pretty cakes pink on Valentine's Day, pastel hues for Easter, or other colors to lend sweetness to any occasion.

- 1 cup sugar
- 6 eggs, slightly beaten
- 1 tablespoon lemon juice
- 2 teaspoons vanilla

- 1 cup all-purpose flour
 - ½ cup unsalted butter
(no substitutes), melted
and cooled
 - 1 tablespoon finely shredded
lemon peel
- Lemon Satin Icing**

PREHEAT oven to 350°F. Grease a 13×9×2-inch baking pan. Line the bottom with waxed paper; grease paper. Set aside.

PLACE sugar and eggs in a 3- to 4-quart heatproof mixing bowl. Place bowl over 1 to 2 inches hot water in a large saucepan (bowl should not touch water). Heat over low heat, stirring occasionally, for 5 to 10 minutes or until egg mixture is lukewarm (105°F to 110°F). Remove bowl from saucepan. Add the lemon juice and vanilla.

BEAT egg mixture with electric mixer on high speed for 10 minutes. Sift about one-third of the flour over egg mixture. Gently fold in flour. Repeat sifting and folding in one-third of the flour at a time. Gently fold in melted butter and lemon peel. Spread batter into prepared pan.

BAKE in the preheated oven for 25 minutes or until a wooden toothpick inserted near the center of the cake comes out clean. Cool cake in pan on a wire rack for 10 minutes. Remove cake from pan; peel off paper. Cool thoroughly on rack.

USING a serrated knife, trim sides and top of cake to make the edges smooth and straight. Cut cake into 1½-inch squares, diamonds, triangles, and/or circles. Brush off crumbs. Place the cake pieces on wire racks with waxed paper underneath racks.

INSERT a 2- or 3-prong, long-handled fork into the side of one cake piece. Holding the cake over the saucepan of Lemon Satin Icing,

spoon on enough icing to cover sides and top. Place frosted cake piece back on the wire rack, making sure it doesn't touch other cake pieces. Repeat with remaining pieces. Let cakes dry 15 minutes. Repeat with a second layer of icing, except set cake pieces on top of the fork prongs (do not spear them). Repeat with a third layer of icing. If necessary, reuse the icing that has dripped onto the waxed paper, straining it to remove crumbs. Tint any remaining icing with food coloring as desired and pipe or drizzle atop cakes.

LEMON SATIN ICING: Combine 4½ cups *granulated sugar*, 2¼ cups *water*, and ¼ teaspoon *cream of tartar* in a 3-quart saucepan. Bring mixture to boiling over medium-high heat, stirring constantly for 5 to 9 minutes or until the sugar dissolves. Reduce heat to medium-low. Clip a candy thermometer to side of the saucepan. Cook until thermometer registers 226°F, stirring only when necessary to prevent sticking. Mixture should boil at a moderate, steady rate over the entire surface (this should take about 15 minutes). Remove saucepan from heat. Cool sugar mixture at room temperature, without stirring, to 110°F (allow about 1 hour). Stir 1 tablespoon *lemon juice* into sugar mixture. Stir in 6 to 6¾ cups *sifted powdered sugar* until icing is easy to drizzle. If necessary, beat the icing with a rotary beater or a wire whisk to remove any lumps. If the icing gets too thick to drizzle, beat in a few drops *hot water*.



Hazelnut Crinkle Cookies

HAZELNUT CRINKLE COOKIES

Crunchy toasted hazelnuts and a creamy hazelnut chocolate spread flavor these chewy cookies. Look for the dark-color hazelnut spread in the peanut butter or gourmet foods section of your supermarket.

- 3 cups all-purpose flour
- 2 teaspoons baking powder
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon salt
- 1 11-ounce jar chocolate-hazelnut spread
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup shortening
- $1\frac{1}{3}$ cups granulated sugar
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- 2 eggs
- $\frac{1}{3}$ cup milk
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup chopped, toasted hazelnuts
- Finely chopped hazelnuts (about 2 cups)
- Sifted powdered sugar

STIR together flour, baking powder, and salt in a medium bowl; set aside.

COMBINE chocolate-hazelnut spread and shortening in a large mixing bowl; beat with an electric mixer on medium to high speed until combined. Add granulated sugar; beat on medium speed until fluffy. Add vanilla and eggs; beat just until combined.

ALTERNATELY add flour mixture and milk to creamed mixture, beating on medium speed just until combined. Use a spoon to stir in the $\frac{1}{2}$ cup chopped hazelnuts. Cover and chill for several hours or until firm.

PREHEAT oven to 375°F. Shape the dough into 1- or $1\frac{1}{2}$ -inch balls. Roll the balls in finely chopped hazelnuts, then roll in powdered sugar. Place the balls 2 inches apart on a lightly greased cookie sheet. (The cookies will spread and crinkle as they bake.) Bake in the preheated oven for 8 to 10 minutes or until surface is cracked and cookies are set. Cool cookies on a wire rack. Makes about 6 dozen.

RASPBERRY-CHOCOLATE CAKE

This decadent cake is featured on the cover of this booklet.

- $2\frac{1}{4}$ cups all-purpose flour
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- $\frac{3}{4}$ teaspoon baking soda
- $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon salt
- $\frac{2}{3}$ cup butter (no substitutes), softened
- $1\frac{3}{4}$ cups sugar
- 2 eggs
- 3 ounces unsweetened chocolate, melted and cooled
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- $1\frac{1}{4}$ cups water
- 3 tablespoons raspberry liqueur or framboise (optional)
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup seedless raspberry jam
- Raspberry-Chocolate Frosting
- Fresh raspberries (optional)
- Chocolate leaves (optional)

PREHEAT oven to 350°F. Grease and lightly flour two 9×1½-inch round baking pans; set aside. Stir together flour, baking powder, baking soda, and salt in a mixing bowl; set aside.

BEAT butter in a large mixing bowl with an electric mixer on medium to high speed for 30 seconds. Add sugar; beat until well-mixed. Add eggs, one at a time, beating well after each addition. Beat in chocolate and vanilla. Add the dry mixture and the water alternately to beaten mixture, beating on low speed after each addition, just until combined. Pour batter into the prepared pans; spread evenly.

BAKE in the preheated oven for 30 to 35 minutes or until a wooden toothpick inserted near centers comes out clean. Cool cake layers in pans on wire racks for 10 minutes. Remove cakes from pans. Cool cake layers thoroughly on racks.

TO ASSEMBLE, split cake layers in half horizontally to make four layers. If desired, drizzle each cake layer with raspberry liqueur or framboise.

PLACE one cake layer, cut side up, on serving plate; spread with half of the raspberry jam. Top with second cake layer, cut side down. Spread with about $\frac{2}{3}$ cup Raspberry-Chocolate Frosting.

PLACE another cake layer, cut side up, on top of frosting; spread with remaining jam. Top with last cake layer, cut side down.

FROST top and sides with all but $\frac{3}{4}$ cup of the remaining frosting. Pipe remaining frosting on top of cake. If desired, garnish with raspberries and chocolate leaves. Makes 14 servings.

RASPBERRY-CHOCOLATE FROSTING: Combine 1 10-ounce *package frozen red raspberries in syrup, thawed*, 1 envelope *unflavored gelatin*, 1 12-ounce *package semisweet chocolate pieces* (2 cups), $1\frac{1}{2}$ cups *whipping cream*, 1 teaspoon *vanilla*. Press undrained raspberries through a sieve; discard seeds. (You should have about 1 cup puree.) Combine the puree and gelatin in a small saucepan; let stand 5 minutes. Cook and stir over medium-low heat until gelatin is dissolved; set aside. Meanwhile, combine the chocolate pieces, whipping cream, and vanilla in a heavy medium saucepan. Cook and stir over low heat until chocolate pieces are melted. Whisk smooth. Stir in raspberry mixture; heat and stir until smooth. Transfer to a large mixing bowl. Cover and refrigerate about 3 hours or until thoroughly chilled, stirring occasionally. Beat with an electric mixer just until fluffy. Makes about $3\frac{1}{2}$ cups (enough to fill and frost a four-layer cake).

CHOCOLATE LEAVES: Refer to page 15 for instructions.

PINEAPPLE RIBBONS

We reinforced the ribbon theme by piping a squiggle of Powdered Sugar Icing on each cookie, then sprinkling with nonpareils.

You also can drizzle with melted chocolate.

- 1 cup butter (no substitutes), softened**
- 1 3-ounce package cream cheese, softened**
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup sugar**
- 1 teaspoon baking powder**
- 1 egg**
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup pineapple preserves or apricot-pineapple preserves**
- $3\frac{1}{2}$ cups all-purpose flour**
- Powdered Sugar Icing (optional)**
- Nonpareils (optional)**

PREHEAT oven to 375°F. Beat butter and cream cheese in a large mixing bowl with an electric mixer on medium to high speed for 30 seconds. Add sugar and baking powder; beat until combined, scraping sides of bowl occasionally. Beat in egg and preserves until combined. Beat in as much of the flour as you can with the mixer. Stir in the remaining flour with a wooden spoon. Divide dough in half.

ROLL each portion of dough on a lightly floured surface into a 16×10-inch rectangle. Cut into 1¼-inch-wide strips with a fluted pastry cutter; cut strips crosswise into 4-inch pieces. Place pieces 1 inch apart on an ungreased cookie sheet. If desired, curve pieces slightly.

BAKE in the preheated oven for 7 to 8 minutes or until edges are firm and bottoms are lightly browned. Cool on cookie sheet for 1 minute. Transfer to wire racks and cool completely. If desired, drizzle with Powdered Sugar Icing and sprinkle with nonpareils. Place in an airtight

container or plastic bag, and store at room temperature up to 3 days. Makes about 96.

POWDERED SUGAR ICING: Stir together 2 cups sifted *powdered sugar* and 2 tablespoons *milk* in a small bowl. Stir in additional *milk* 1 teaspoon at a time to make of drizzling consistency.

TO FREEZE, bake cookies as directed; cool. Place undecorated cookies in a freezer container; freeze up to 1 month. Before serving, thaw in freezer container at room temperature for 15 minutes. If desired, decorate with Powdered Sugar Icing and nonpareils.

PECAN ROUNDS

After processing the pecans to a butterlike consistency, add the rest of the ingredients to the food processor container and complete the mixing.

- $1\frac{1}{2}$ cups pecan pieces**
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup butter (no substitutes), cut up**
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup granulated sugar**
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup packed brown sugar**
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon baking soda**
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon baking powder**
- 1 egg**
- 1 teaspoon vanilla**
- $1\frac{1}{3}$ cups all-purpose flour**
- Granulated sugar**

SPREAD pecan pieces in a single layer in a shallow baking pan. Bake in a 350°F oven for 5 to 10 minutes or until light golden brown; watch carefully and stir once or twice. Let cool slightly. Place toasted nuts in a food processor bowl. Cover and process until a paste forms, stopping to scrape the sides of the bowl occasionally (mixture will appear grainy).

ADD butter, granulated sugar, brown sugar, baking soda, and baking powder. Process just until combined. Add egg and vanilla; process just until combined. Add flour; process with on/off turns just until flour is combined. Transfer dough to a mixing bowl; cover and chill about 1 hour or until easy to handle.

SHAPE dough into 1-inch balls; roll in additional granulated sugar. Place 2 inches apart on an ungreased cookie sheet. Use the bottom of a glass to flatten balls slightly. Bake in a 375°F oven for 7 to 9 minutes or until lightly browned. Transfer to wire racks and cool. Makes about 48.



Pineapple Ribbons

SPICE BITES

Crisp on the outside, cakelike on the inside, these cookies have genuine old-fashioned flavor.

- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup light-flavor molasses
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup packed brown sugar
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup butter (no substitutes)
- 4 cups all-purpose flour
- $1\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoons ground cinnamon
- $1\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoons baking soda
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon ground nutmeg
- $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon pepper
- 2 eggs
- Milk
- Coarse decorating sugar or granulated sugar

PREHEAT oven to 375°F. Combine molasses, brown sugar, and butter in a large saucepan. Heat and stir just until melted. Cool mixture about 20 minutes. Stir together flour, cinnamon, baking soda, nutmeg, and pepper in a large mixing bowl; set aside.

BEAT eggs into cooled molasses mixture with a wooden spoon. Stir in flour mixture. Cover dough with plastic wrap, and chill for 1 to 2 hours or until easy to handle.

DIVIDE dough into six equal portions. Roll each portion on a lightly floured surface into a 10-inch rope. Cut ropes diagonally into $\frac{3}{4}$ -inch pieces. Brush the top of each piece with milk, and dip in coarse sugar or granulated sugar; place 2 inches apart on an ungreased baking sheet.

BAKE in the preheated oven for 7 to 8 minutes or until edges are firm and bottoms are lightly browned. Transfer to wire racks and cool. Makes about 60.



Star Tarts

STAR TARTS

These tiny tart shells bake on the outside of muffin cups, not on the inside.

- $1\frac{1}{2}$ cups all-purpose flour
- $\frac{1}{3}$ cup granulated sugar
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup cold butter (no substitutes)
- 1 beaten egg yolk
- $\frac{1}{3}$ cup cold water
- 1 beaten egg
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup packed brown sugar
- $\frac{1}{3}$ cup canned pumpkin
- 2 tablespoons butter or margarine, melted
- 1 tablespoon rum or milk
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon ground cinnamon
- $\frac{1}{8}$ teaspoon ground nutmeg
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup chopped pecans
- Whipped cream (optional)

PREHEAT oven to 325°F. Stir together flour and granulated sugar in a medium mixing bowl. Cut in cold butter until pieces are the size of small peas. Stir together egg yolk and water; gradually stir into flour mixture (mixture may be crumbly). Use your

hands to gently knead the dough just until a ball forms. Divide dough in half. Cover and chill for 1 hour.

ROLL each half of dough on a lightly floured surface until $\frac{1}{8}$ -inch thick. Cut with a $3\frac{1}{2}$ -inch star-shape cutter to make 24 stars. (Reroll scraps as necessary.) Invert a $1\frac{1}{4}$ -inch muffin pan. Place star cutouts over the bottoms of the ungreased cups, alternating cups to avoid crowding the dough. Press and pleat dough as necessary to obtain the cup shape. Bake in the preheated oven for 10 minutes or until edges just start to brown. Cool 5 minutes and carefully remove from pans. Invert star cups and place on a cookie sheet.

COMBINE egg, brown sugar, pumpkin, melted butter or margarine, rum or milk, vanilla, cinnamon, and nutmeg. Stir in pecans. Spoon about 1 tablespoon filling into each star cup.

BAKE in the preheated oven for 12 to 14 minutes or until filling is set and pastry is golden. Transfer to wire racks and cool. Cover with foil and refrigerate until serving time or overnight. To serve, if desired, dollop each tart with whipped cream. Makes 24.

Italian Fruit-Filled Cookies



ITALIAN FRUIT-FILLED COOKIES

To save time, use a food processor to chop the figs and dates.

Place 1 cup halved dates and 1 cup halved figs in the bowl.

Add the 2 tablespoons granulated sugar called for in the filling and process with on/off turns until the fruit is finely chopped.

- ½ cup butter (no substitutes)**
- ¼ cup granulated sugar**
- ¼ cup packed brown sugar**
- ¼ teaspoon baking soda**
- 1 egg**
- 1 teaspoon vanilla**
- 1¾ cups all-purpose flour**
- 2 apples, peeled and finely chopped (2½ cups)**
- 1 cup finely chopped dried figs**
- 1 cup finely chopped pitted dates**
- 2 tablespoons granulated sugar**

- ¼ teaspoon ground cinnamon**
- 1 teaspoon finely shredded orange peel**
- ¼ cup orange juice**
- ½ cup finely chopped almonds**
- Lemon Glaze**

PREHEAT oven to 375°F. Beat butter in a mixing bowl with an electric mixer on medium to high speed for 30 seconds. Add ¼ cup granulated sugar, the brown sugar, and baking soda; beat until combined, scraping sides of bowl occasionally. Beat in egg and vanilla. Beat in as much of the flour as you can with the mixer. Stir in remaining flour with a wooden spoon. Divide dough in half. If necessary, cover and chill dough for 30 minutes or until easy to handle.

MEANWHILE, combine apples, figs, dates, 2 tablespoons granulated sugar, the cinnamon, orange peel, and orange juice in a saucepan. Bring to boiling. Reduce heat,

cover, and cook about 10 minutes or until apples are tender and mixture is thick. Stir in almonds. Cool to room temperature.

ROLL each half of dough on a floured cloth into a 10×8-inch rectangle. Cut lengthwise into two 10×4-inch strips. Spoon *one-fourth* of filling (about ½ cup) lengthwise down center in a 1-inch-wide strip. Using the cloth, lift one side of dough, then the other to cover filling and meet in the center. Pinch edges to seal. Transfer roll to an ungreased cookie sheet. Repeat with remaining dough and filling.

BAKE in the preheated oven for 10 to 12 minutes or until lightly browned. While rolls are warm, cut diagonally into 1-inch slices. Drizzle with Lemon Glaze. Makes about 40.

LEMON GLAZE: Stir together ¾ cup sifted *powdered sugar* and 2 to 3 teaspoons *lemon juice* to make a glaze of drizzling consistency.

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